

Prior art document WO 98/56232 discloses a plant seed germination method as claimed in the preamble of claim 1.

### Disclosure of the Invention

The main object of the present invention is to provide a sod for forming lawns or other cultivations, which can be stored for a long time in environmental conditions without problems, so that it can be produced all over the year with no interruption.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a method for producing sods and for providing lawns, which is extremely simple to carry out.

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of preparing a plant cultivation, particularly a lawn, as defined in the appended claims,

Advantageously, after drying the sod can be packaged in a packaging material for storage and transport purposes.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a sod for cultivating plants, which comprises a seeded seeding bed which may have already received an addition of fertilizer and a suitable bonding agent for maintaining the parallelepiped-like shape given to it.

### Brief description of the drawings

Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become better apparent from the detailed description of some non-exclusive

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embodiments thereof, illustrated only by way of non-limitative examples in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figures 1 and 2 shows each a schematic view of the procedure for obtaining sods according to the invention, and

Figure 3 is a perspective partial view of a store where sods obtained according to the invention are preserved.

### Ways of carrying out the invention

#### Example 1

A lawn was provided in a shaded area of a home garden and parts of this area were decorated with jewelweeds - see Figure 1 of the drawings.

In order to provide a grassy layer, a mixer 1 was first used to mix the following components so as to obtain a granular mix:

- 80-90% by volume of inert silica sand
- 10-20% by volume of peat
- potato starch as natural bonding agent

The mix was poured into a hopper 2 and from there it was deposited onto a conveyor belt 3 so as to form a non-interrupted layer of 1.5 to 8 cm.

Further along the path, the seeding machine 4 deposited onto the layer, carried by the conveyor belt 3, the mixture of seeds of the following species:

- 15% *Agrostis tennis*
- 30% *Festuca ovina*
- 15% *Festuca rubra commutata*
- 20% *Poa nemoralis*
- 20% *Poa pratensis*

Inside the mixer 5, instead, a very rich mixture of fertilizer was prepared which also contained herbicide according to the following components: inert silica sand, peat, fertilizer providing slow release of nitrogenous substances, with phosphate and potassium, dicotyledon-selective herbicide, potato starch as natural bonding agent.

The preparation was fed beneath the hopper 6, from where it was poured

onto the conveyor belt, so as to form a 1/2-cm layer of soil which covered the seeds deposited earlier.

Through a press 7, the stratified mixture was die-cut or extruded through an extrusion die in order to form tiles, for example hexagonal in shape, measuring approximately 1.5 to 8 cm in thickness.

Instead of extruding the tiles at the end, it is possible to deposit successive layers in suitable molds in reverse order with respect to that of the above description. The mixture can be settled by means of vibrations imparted to the mold and left to rest for a short time, so that the bonding agent begins to bond. Finally, by turning over the molds, the seeds, the fertilizer and the herbicide lie directly below the surface of the tile.

The seeds were placed near the surface since that is their natural level, from which, after moistening, in the appropriate season and at suitable temperature, the bud will emerge promptly. The herbicide is useful only if it is located close to the surface in order to hinder germination of weed seeds carried by the wind or other carriers. A chemical fertilizer also was placed at a high level in order to be near the seeds, since due to watering it tends to percolate downwards, where there are no roots as they are not formed yet.

The chemical fertilizer is the first nutritional substance which provides minerals to the buds, even because said buds may not be formed straightaway and microorganisms and bacteria responsible for decomposition of any organic material may not be immediately available or become fully active.

In order to continuously cover the surface to be revegetated, it is possible in particular to use sods having geometric shapes which are commonly used for floor tiles, i.e. polygonal shapes, such as squares, rectangles and regular hexagons, octagons and triangles. Among these, however, preference is given to squares and rectangles for packaging and storing reasons. The hexagon has the advantage of having obtuse angles and therefore somewhat less brittle corners.